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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ADDIS ABABA 001531

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [SO](#) [ET](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA: ETHIOPIAN STATE MINISTER TEKEDA DISCUSSES
HAWIYE ENGAGEMENT WITH SPECIAL ENVOY-DESIGNATE YATES

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 1500
[1](#)B. ADDIS ABABA 1457
[1](#)C. ADDIS ABABA 1349

Classified By: ERIC WONG, DEPUTY POL-ECON COUNSELOR. REASON: 1.4 (B) A
ND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. In a follow-up to May 11 consultations with AF DAS Swan, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tekeda presented a GOE non-paper on May 15 to visiting Ambassador John Yates and Ambassador, expressing Ethiopia's shared concerns about the need for Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG) President Abdullahi Yusuf to address concerns of the Hawiye clan. Tekeda highlighted property rights, particularly the disposition of Somali government buildings currently occupied by the Hawiye, as a key political challenge. Engagement of the Somali diaspora, as well as expediting the deployment of AU peacekeeping forces to allow Ethiopia's military withdrawal, were other priorities, according to Tekeda. GOE officials highlighted ongoing political activities by Hawiye sub-clans, including meetings among Murosade and Duduble elders, and noted that President Yusuf had met recently with the Suleiman sub-clan. Tekeda reiterated criticism of the role Egypt and the EU sought to play in Somalia, attributing Egyptian actions to tensions with Ethiopia over Nile water resources. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) On May 15, visiting Counselor for Somali Affairs Amb. John Yates, Ambassador, and deputy pol-econ counselor (note-taker) met with Ethiopia's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takeda Alemu and Acting Chief of the Minister's Cabinet Abdeta Dribssa to follow up on May 11 consultations led by AF DAS Jim Swan (ref B). Minister Tekeda presented a GOE non-paper (forwarded to AF/E and Embassy Nairobi) which he said provided a general roadmap for approaching Yusuf about enhancing political accommodation of the Hawiye clan. Tekeda stressed that Yusuf and other TFG leaders needed to address this challenge as soon as possible, "while they are still in the driver's seat," as "the status quo, no matter the veneer of the current relative stability, cannot be sustained." As highlighted in its non-paper, the GOE believed that no TFG official except Yusuf should be immune from replacement. There should be "no sacred cows" except President Yusuf, Tekeda said; all TFG officials should be "at the mercy" of the deliberations of the upcoming National Reconciliation Conference (NRC). Tekeda reiterated that the

TFG had to address all grievances and be guided by the principle of "winning friends." Immediate action by the TFG, prior to the convening of the NRC, was imperative.

13. (C) Minister Tekeda cautioned, however, that even as Ethiopia and the U.S. sought to exert maximum pressure on the TFG, one needed to be wary of undermining the TFG. Noting that the GOE had been "brutally frank" in its consultations with the TFG in Addis Ababa and Mogadishu, Tekeda recommended that the U.S.-GOE approach Yusuf privately, in order to avoid both "grandstanding" and inadvertently assisting parties seeking to undermine the TFG. Tekeda highlighted Eritrea's support for the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) as "totally outrageous and unacceptable," but noted that other countries were engaged in activities "less spectacular but equally damaging."

14. (C) Tekeda noted that Foreign Minister Seyoum had met earlier with both Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr leaders in Mogadishu, and with Yusuf prior to traveling in April to Washington. FM Seyoum intended to meet Yusuf again as soon as possible at a venue to be determined, Tekeda said. Amb. Yates responded that meeting in Mogadishu would be difficult for the USG. Yates underscored Somalia's need for a political solution within the next two to three weeks, to avoid having al-Shabaab elements reorganize. Unless the Hawiye Leadership Council was able to demonstrate its ability to deliver to Hawiye constituents, the council risking fracturing, Yates said.

PRIORITIES: PROPERTY RIGHTS, DIASPORA, ETHIOPIAN WITHDRAWAL

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15. (C) Tekeda highlighted the primacy of addressing Hawiye grievances about property rights, which had motivated much of the fighting in Mogadishu by the CIC's al-Shabaab. The disposition of government buildings, including ministries now physically occupied by the Hawiye, was a key concern. It was also critical to incorporate the Somali diaspora, to demonstrate the TFG was a Somali government, not one dominated solely by the Darod/Majerteen. Finally, Tekeda stressed that the Ethiopian military needed to withdraw from Somalia as soon as possible. Alluding to the GOE's own extensive contacts with Hawiye leaders, Tekeda attributed Ethiopia's military success in Somalia to political outreach.

Ethiopia's withdrawal would help encourage the return of diaspora, but a small hard-line "vitriolic" minority would always remain opposed to the TFG and Ethiopian engagement. Referring to foreign fighters from Europe and other countries who had been captured in Somalia, Tekeda noted the irony of CIC combatants coming from democratic countries and "creating havoc" in the Horn of Africa.

16. (C) Tekeda chastised the paucity of African troop contributing countries (TCC) willing to deploy forces in support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), noting that Ethiopia had contributed peacekeepers to both Liberia and Burundi even though neither was in Ethiopia's subregion. Any African TCC with capacity should contribute to AMISOM, he said.

POLITICAL FOCUS MUST BE ON HAWIYE SUB-CLANS

17. (C) The problem of political accommodation now needed to be addressed at the level of sub-clans, Tekeda said. Even within TFG President Yusuf's Darod clan, building support among the Darod/Merehan sub-clan was critical, or else "Kismayo could explode," Tekeda warned. Tekeda observed that U.S. references to "Hawiye" did not reflect the complexity of the situation in Mogadishu, as sub-clans of the Hawiye were now politically engaged with the TFG. Amb. Yates agreed that

some Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr leaders looked forward to working on a political solution for Somalia.

¶8. (C) Chef de Cabinet Abdeta asserted that there were few grievances about power-sharing among Hawiye/Abgal (with the exception of the sub-clan of a Council of Islamic Courts financier), who generally viewed the TFG as a partner. Other Hawiye sub-clans, however, sought to assert legitimate property rights over property gained illegitimately. Thus, grievances by the Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr, Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Suleiman, and Hawiye/Murosade were seen by many Somalis as claims for new rights by "outsiders," Abdeta said. On the other hand, some Hawiye sub-clans viewed Yusuf's statements as provocative. Yusuf faced the challenge of maintaining support among his own constituency, while addressing Hawiye sub-clan grievances without encouraging spoilers. According to Abdeta, daily sitreps from Ethiopian officials in Somalia showed that "force is no longer in play," and that the political process was now key. Despite attempted looting of WHO facilities the previous day, the general situation in Somalia had improved.

¶9. (C) Abdeta reported that several Hawiye sub-clans had recently held separate meetings to consolidate sub-clan positions in anticipation of further talks with the TFG:
-- Some 70 representatives of the Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Suleiman sub-clan (including government ministers, MPs, elders, and intellectuals) had met recently with President Yusuf and argued for greater political representation within the TFG. The Suleiman had nevertheless declared that they recognized the TFG as the legitimate government of Somalia, and pledged to surrender arms and militia.
-- Some 60 members of Mohamed Afrah Qanyare's Hawiye/Murosade sub-clan had held an internal meeting to identify issues to be presented to Yusuf upon his return this week from Uganda.
-- Similarly, the Hawiye/Duduble sub-clan were expected to conclude an internal meeting on May 15. Discussion topics included disavowing any responsibility for attacks that occurred during the May 14 visit of UN U/SYG for Humanitarian

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Affairs Holmes, and protesting the TFG's detention of Duduble sub-clan members suspected of involvement in the attacks.

DISTRUST OF SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT, EU

¶10. (C) While better to engage than isolate Egypt, Tekeda observed "their hearts will never be with us fully." It should have been in Egypt's interest to stop hard-core CIC elements, but tensions with Ethiopia over Nile water resources prevailed. "What they tell us is not consonant with they tell others," he added. As 85 per cent of the Nile's water came from Ethiopia, Egypt sought "to keep Ethiopia off-balance," fearing that as Ethiopia developed economically, Ethiopia would require more water resources. Nevertheless, Tekeda said, Ethiopia sought a "win-win" relationship with Egypt, as it ultimately did not want to undermine President Mubarak.

¶11. (C) Tekeda expressed optimism that it was easier to engage Saudi Arabia, which sought to play a more pro-active role in Somalia, but cautioned that one could not rule out the threat of Wahhabist influence. Similarly, support from the European Union was key (e.g., maintaining the EU's financial support of the TFG parliament), but "personal grandstanding" by EC Development Commissioner Louis Michel had been damaging.

¶12. (C) COMMENT. This was the second of three meetings (refs A-B) since May 11 with State Minister Tekeda to discuss a joint GOE-U.S. approach to TFG President Yusuf. The GOE's May 15 non-paper (forwarded to AF/E and Embassy Nairobi) does not propose specific language to present to Yusuf, but echoes Minister Tekeda's observations outlined above and reflects

that the GOE shares U.S. concerns that immediate steps must be taken by the TFG to improve political engagement of Hawiye sub-clans, in advance of the National Reconciliation Conference in June. END COMMENT.

¶13. (U) Embassy Nairobi cleared this cable.
YAMAMOTO